WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Military Ties with Australia

*422. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Australia recently resumed military ties, which were jerked off the rails after the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests when both countries withdrew their military attaches and other military contacts came to a grinding halt;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) by when the agreements between the two countries would be signed resuming supply of defence equipments to India?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) During his visit to India in March 2000, the Australian Foreign Minister had discussions with our External Affairs Minister, during which it was felt that the bilateral relations should not be held hostage by the single issue of nonproliferation and accordingly it was agreed 'in principle' to resume defence relations. The modalities of the resumption of defence ties would be worked out through diplomatic channels.

Setting up Power Plants in Assam

*443.SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a scheme to set up power plants in the state of Assam during the next two years; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) At present three sanctioned hydro electric projects are under execution in the state of Assam as detailed below:—

Sl. No.	Name of Project		
1.	Kopili St. II (NEEPCO)	Central Sector 1 x 25 MW	Scheduled for commissioning in 2003-04
2.	Karbi Langpi (Lower Borpani)	State Sector 2 x 50 MW	Scheduled for commissioning in the Tenth Plan
3.	Dhansiri	State Sector 5 x 3 x 1.33 MW	Scheduled for commissioning in the Tenth Plan

The following three thermal projects are proposed to be taken up in the State of Assam in the near future:—

1.	Amguri CCGT	8GTs+4STs (8 x 30+4 x 30 MW)	The gas linkage has not yet been tied up
2.	Lakhwa Waste Heat Unit	38 MW	ASEB has approached the State Government for financial tie up
3.	Borgolai TPP	2 x 60 mw	The project is proposed to be taken up in the Private Sector on Build, own Operate (BOO) basis.

The State of Assam will also be entitled to share power generated in the following ongoing Central Sector projects in North Eastern Region:—

Sl. No.	Name of Project	State	Installed Capacity (MW)	Remarks
NEEPCO				
1.	Doyang	Nagaland	3 x 25	To be commissioned in 2000-2001
2.	Ranganadi	Ar. Pradesh	3 x 35	To be commissioned in 2001-2002
3.	Tuirial	Mizoram	2 x 30	To be commissioned in 2005-2007
N.H.P.C.				
4.	Loktak Downstream	Manipur	3 x 30	To be commissioned in 2006-2007